

and carved by men, also bespeaks the men's expectations toward the female body and its possession.

The clothed body surely conveys notions of one's social status, but it is also the representation of certain individualising physiognomic features to better express the personal identity of the subject. However, as Dillon shows in Chapter 3, the female portrait faces reveal a certain homogeneity in spite of the adoption of a variety of facial proportions and hairstyles. The author suggests some possible interesting reasons for this quasi-anonymity of the female portraits. Given the social conditions of ancient women, an upper-class woman would hardly have had the possibility of sitting for a male artist of the artisan class for her portrait. Moreover, because of the collective identity of elite women, who played a narrow range of exemplary roles within the family (as a daughter, wife, and mother) and society (as priestess), the association between real physiognomy and personal identity was not the primary concern in female portraiture. Rather, it was the visual representation of an ideal beauty which was the most typical signifier of female identity.

The adoption of an idealising style for the representations of female portraits is still attested in the Roman period, though the Roman sculptural traditions had some impact on Greek portraiture. In Chapter 4, Dillon discusses evidence for portrait statues of women in Thasos, Aphrodisias, and Perge to show that the Roman style of portraiture, with its emphasis on more realistic and individualised physiognomy, was adopted along with the traditional generic Greek style or what the author describes as the "not portrait" style.

The book closes with a carefully selected bibliography and four useful appendices which list portrait statues attested in Athens and Delos from the 4<sup>th</sup> till the 1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C.E. In the concluding line of her work Dillon states that "we must ask different questions [...] If this book has persuaded its readers to do this, then it will have accomplished its task." (p. 167). Her book certainly raises some questions which are left unanswered here: given the wider number of statues depicting ideal and divine female figures, how did their iconography influence the portrayal of historical women? For even the well-known image of Aphrodite of Knidos carved by Praxiteles conveys a message of ideal beauty and modesty through her nudity and gesture of covering her pubes with her hand. Moreover, while Dillon focuses only on the standing statues, what visual impact had the seated female portraits? What message did they convey? In the search of these answers, Dillon's work already provides scholars with ample material for further discussion and deeper understanding of ancient society.

*Margherita Carucci*

CORINNA RIVA: *The Urbanisation of Etruria. Funerary Practices and Social Change, 700–600 BC*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-51447-7. XII, 247 pp. GBP 50, USD 85.

Corinna Riva's book, based on her PhD thesis at the University of Cambridge, discusses the sociopolitical transformations in Etruria during the Orientalising period. In a way, the subtitle of the book better describes its content: over half the text analyses the development of funerary ideology and grave-goods. The authoress emphasises, perhaps even too much, the significance of the funeral as a manifestation of political authority and can thus combine the ideological

development, clearly connected with the eastern Mediterranean, with the simultaneous urbanisation process.

Riva has a thorough knowledge of her material, even that from the newest excavations, as well as the secondary literature and modern methodology. Sometimes the conceptual treatment makes simple questions rather complicated. This may also leave the final results of the study a little vague. Riva concludes that "the tomb constituted the physical, material, and conceptual space where elite groups transformed their prestige into political authority; therefore it is at the tomb that political relations themselves within the early city were structured. – At the same time, the funerary landscape transformed the physical landscape of the early city into a political one (pp. 177–78)."

The traditionally "gravecentric" study of the Etruscan culture has in the last few decades been balanced by excavations of settlements and administrative areas. Riva clearly knows this material very well, but in a way, she now turns the focus back to the necropoleis, which not only reflect religious beliefs, social differentiation, and the development of architecture and material culture, but are also, according to her, at the centre of political endeavours. She may in this respect go too far; it is hard to believe that the elites of these early cities had to wait for funerals before being able to display their political authority.

Riva's book contains rich and partly new information about, for example, contacts with the Eastern Mediterranean, differences (and similarities) between female and male burials and the differing development of urban and extra-urban centres. Although she clearly states that the catalyst of the Orientalising process was the reopening of Mediterranean trade, the discussion of the economy of early Etruria remains unsatisfactory. Landowning was certainly the basis for the political power of the elite. But one could assume that even in this period, more power was in the hands of those who controlled trade. What happened when a captain from Corinth arrived at the coast of Southern Etruria, the ship full of refined clay, of which Corinth had enough, and willing to exchange it for corn and metal, of which there was insufficient for the growing Corinthian population? The captain hardly went around the farms with nice amphoras in his chariot. And at least in other societies, the role of tradesmen has been more important than that of farmers.

Riva's book is a good, even though somewhat one-sided, contribution to the discussion around the *formazione* of Etruscan society.

*Jorma Kaimio*

MARIA CRISTINA BIELLA: *Impasti orientalizzanti con decorazione ad incavo nell'Italia centrale tirrenica*. Tyrrhenica 6; Archaeologica 146. Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, Roma 2007. ISBN 978-88-7689-226-5. XXXIV, 279 pp., 45 tavv., 43 figg. EUR 180.

Questo libro raccoglie un interessante corpus del vasellame in impasto con decorazione a incavo (o excisione). L'originale tecnica, che in pratica comportava l'asportazione dello strato superficiale dell'argilla all'interno della sagoma, sembra sia emersa nell'Italia centrale nel VII secolo a.C., con nuclei di produzione particolarmente fiorenti nell'agro falisco-capenate. Nel catalogo vengono presentati 210 vasi (largamente inediti e provenienti per lo più dalle necropoli di Capena e Falerii Veteres), le cui decorazioni sono realizzate (excise) con uno strumento